Instructions for individual projects

Goals

Get (more) experience doing the following:
- Reading (and comparing) primary and secondary literature
- Developing analyses of data in different frameworks
- Assessing frameworks' successes and failures in dealing with particular data
- Clearly and succinctly explaining data, analyses, and theoretical implications to the reader

Procedure

1. Identify a phenomenon that is problematic in SPE but straightforward in OT, or vice versa (or problematic for both!). It might involve...
   - Opaque rule interaction
   - Crucially iterative or non-iterative rule application
   - Multiple rule targets
   - Crucially directional rule application
   - Constraint-specific repairs
   - A rule-ordering paradox; a constraint-ranking paradox
   - ... or something else you can think of

   How do you identify such a phenomenon?
   - Search databases like LLBA (available through www.library.ucla.edu) for terms like *iterat**, *directional*, etc. (you may need to add *phonolog** as an additional keyword)
   - Search scholar.google.com
   - Follow up an example from the readings
   - Think about phenomena/languages you're familiar with and see if anything comes to mind

2. Track down the ***primary source*** of the data. The source you find using the above tips will probably be a *secondary source*—i.e., it discusses already-published data. And the source cited in the work you find may itself be another secondary source. You will have to keep working backwards until you get to a real primary source, which will report fieldwork or the intuitions of the native-speaker author.

3. Read the secondary source for the theoretical claim, but use the primary source for data. **Be vigilant**: the secondary source may misreport or misinterpret the facts; or, when you see the full data an alternative description may become apparent.

4. Optional: if you want to, you can check data with or get new data from a native speaker (including yourself, if applicable).

5. Determine and explore the theoretical implications of the phenomenon.
   - Can the phenomenon, as described, be dealt with in Classic OT? In SPE? (**If the answer to both questions is 'yes, unproblematically', then this not the right phenomenon!**)
   - Why exactly is the phenomenon problematic for OT/SPE (or both)?
   - Are there modifications that could be made to the theory to accommodate the phenomenon?
   - Is there an alternative description/analysis that makes the phenomenon unproblematic (this is where carefully reading the primary source can pay off)?

Here's an example concerning iterativity, following Aaron Kaplan's recent dissertation work.[1] Suppose some language is claimed to have a rule a → i / iC_0__ , and the rule fails to self-feed (is non-iterative): /ibaka/ → [ibika], instead of *[ibiki]. This is problematic for Classic OT, because the MARK>>FAITH ranking *iC_0a>>IDENT(hi) that causes the rule to apply to the underlyingly /iba/ sequence should cause it to apply to the derived [ika] sequence too. It's unproblematic for SPE, assuming that either rules aren't iterative at all or rules can be specified as iterative or non-. To deal with the phenomenon in OT, one possibility would be to change the markedness constraint into a two-level constraint forbidding [a] after an *underlying* /i/—this introduces a new type of constraint and makes the theory more powerful. But perhaps another analysis is available. For example, maybe you find that the /a/s that fail to raise are all stressed (IDENT(hi)/stress >>*iC_0a) , or the /a/s that do raise all belong to a particular affix (you could say that affix's vowel is underspecified for height, so IDENT(hi) isn't violated), or the triggering /i/ and target /a/ are always in the same foot (so the constraint is really *$(...iC_0a...)_{foot}$), or... The point is that by examining the data in detail you'll get a better idea of whether this is truly a case of non-iterativity.

Tips
- Aim for 8-12 pages.
- Write for a reader who has taken 200A but has not read your sources and knows nothing about the language in question.
- Don't just make claims and present data, leaving it to the reader to check whether the data really support the claims—explain the relevance of each piece/set of data.
- How to cite
  - When you quote a source verbatim, put quotation marks around the excerpt and give the page number: *According to Smith, the rule applies with "oblique affixes, clitic pronouns, and postpositions, although certain exceptions exist in the derivational morphology." (p. 53)*
  - When you paraphrase a source or repeat an idea, claim, or fact from a source, make that clear: *Smith (1990) claims that the rule must be iterative, because...* OR *If the rule is not tagged as iterative, an unattractive duplication of the environment in the rule's structural description results (Anderson 1974):...*
  - Indicate the source, including page number, for each datum—<u>you will be glad later</u> if you need to re-check anything, or if you keep working on this project in the future. Just say something in your introductory section about your conventions for this: *Items from Smith will be indicated with "S" and the page number; items from Alameda are indicated with "A" the page number. Items from my own consultant Bika Niue are indicated with "N".*

simpkan	*'sheep'*	S49, N
montkeu	*'cow'*	S49, A24

Oral presentations
- Instead of a final exam, we will schedule a timeslot during exam week for individual presentations, probably 15 minutes each plus 5 minutes for questions, depending on class size.
- Time goes by much faster than you'd think. You will need to practice your talk at least once to have any hope of fitting it in the timeslot.
- Make a handout for your talk. Unlike class handouts, where I leave questions for you to answer, your handout should lay it all out for the reader, so that someone who missed your talk could understand your argument by reading the handout.

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[1] Kaplan, Aaron. 2008. *Noniterativity is an emergent property of grammar*. UC Santa Cruz dissertation.